

City of El Paso

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# Travel Manual

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Prepared by:  
Office of the Comptroller

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Note: The administrative policies and procedures outlined in this manual supersede all previous administrative policies and procedures in place prior to March 2, 2015, that may have been included in memorandums, emails or other means of communication. All questions or conflicts with departmental procedures need to be directed to the Financial Transactions Division of the Office of the Comptroller at (915)212-1164.

## **CITY OF EL PASO**

### **Travel Manual**

#### **1.0 Purpose of Manual**

This manual outlines the administrative policies and procedures with respect to travel and related activities for the City of El Paso (the “**City**”). Travel policies are approved by the City Manager.

Travel shall be by the most economical option available.

The policies and regulations for travel set forth in this procedure shall apply to all activities financed by any funds for which the City has fiduciary or oversight responsibility including state, federal or private grants unless the terms of the said grant require differently.

#### **2.0 City Ordinances – Travel**

*City Ordinances, originally established in 1986, governed City travel policies. Subsequent to this time, all related ordinances have been repealed and administrative regulations have been developed by the Office of the Comptroller Department and approved by the City Manager that will govern travel and related activities for the City of El Paso.*

#### **3.0 Definitions**

- A. **Actual Expenses** – Expenses supported by actual receipts, detailing items purchased.
- B. **Advance** – Funds allotted to an employee prior to travel. This is a payment for anticipated travel expenses, any unused portions must be returned to the City of El Paso via the Cashiers’ office along with the Travel Reconciliation form. Any funds owed to the City should be paid within ten (10) business days of travel reconciliation, if not paid, amounts will deducted through payroll deductions.
- C. **Emergency Travel** – Travel authorized by the City Manager for the conducting of business in an emergency.
- D. **Expense Reconciliation** – A reconciliation, usually prepared by the employee traveling, of the expenses incurred during a particular trip that is prepared after the travel, or upon the completion of the travel, to determine if actual travel expenses exceeded or were less than the approved amounts advanced. All travel reconciliations must be accompanied by original receipts where required. Where receipts are missing, it is up to the individual to attach an explanation and to obtain duplicates.

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- E. **Local Travel/Training (Intra-City)** – Any same day travel to locations in El Paso County and in other locations such as Van Horn, Alamogordo, Las Cruces, Dell City which does not require overnight accommodations and for which approval is not required.
- F. **Mileage Rate** – The City will reimburse mileage rate using the standard mileage rate set by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The rates are subject to changes as per IRS announcements. You can refer to the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).
- G. **Necessary and Reasonable Expenses** – Criteria used to evaluate expenses which are not supported by actual receipts such as miscellaneous expenses.
- H. **P-card Purchases** – Any purchases paid on behalf of the employee on an employees' procurement card for any necessary and reasonable expenses incurred as part of an authorized trip. See the City of El Paso's Procurement Card Manual for policies and procedures related to an employee's use of the P-card.
- I. **Per Diem Allowance** – Per Diem Rates are rates which are established through federal guidelines. This is a monetary allowance for lodging and/or meals. The per diem rate for each calendar day is determined by the location where the lodgings are obtained for that night. These rates can be found at <http://www.gas.gov>.
- J. **Who Qualifies for Travel under the City's Policy?** – A full time active employees of the City including Judges. The regulations of the City Travel Policy do not apply to the employees of the El Paso Employees City Pension Fund.
- K. **Reimbursement** – Funds paid to an employee upon returning from travel when actual expenses exceed the amount advanced.
- L. **Refund** – Any advance in excess of actual expenses which must be returned to the City.
- M. **Travel Request** – Form prescribed by OMB and the Office of the Comptroller which is transmitted for approval to the authorizing department head and which is subsequently used for Expense Reconciliation.
  - a. **"Open" Travel Request** – An authorized Travel Request is considered "open" when an expense report has not been filed with the Department Head and any refund of travel advance due the City or reimbursement due the employee has **not** been paid.
  - b. **"Closed" Travel Request** – An authorized Travel Request is considered "closed" when an expense report has been filed, reconciled and any refund of travel advance due the City or reimbursement due the employee has been paid.
- N. **GSA Schedules** – 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) chapters 300-304, which implements statutory requirements and executive branch policies for travel by federal civilian employees and others authorized to travel at government expense; these are the schedules that are adopted by the City and can be found at

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[www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). Click on "Per Diem Rates."

#### 4.0 General Travel Guidelines

Each department is responsible to plan, arrange and approve requested travel of employees so as to achieve maximum economy and efficiency. Travel should not be granted if the purpose of the trip could be handled by mail or telephone, available local training or other viable options.

All travel requests shall be approved in advance of the travel. Departments should establish different guidelines for this approval, but all travel arrangements and authorizations must be made in advance of the employee traveling. **Failure to adhere to this policy may result in the City's refusal to reimburse employee(s) for any costs associated with any particular trip.**

Planning of trips is essential to reduce travel costs. Travel should be requested far enough in advance for authorization to be granted in time to take advantage of reduced fees offered for early registration and discount airline fares. It is recommended that employees fill out a Travel Request at least fifteen (15) working days prior to the travel date.

Generally, all travel that requires an expenditure of funds should require department head or budgetary authority approval. Funds must be budgeted for travel PRIOR to making any arrangements for travel. Departments should exercise control of travel expense by keeping costs within established appropriations. All Travel Request(s) should be completed prior to taking a particular trip and reconciled at the completion of trips to ensure completeness and appropriateness of expenses claimed.

In general, the City assumes the following basic premises when Departments conduct travel:

- A. Departments have adequate budget to support the expenditures to be incurred by all individuals traveling.
- B. All travel, regardless of purpose, funding source or cost, is to be routed through the respective:
  - 1 Chief Performance Officer (CPO)-
    - i. 911/311 Communications
    - ii. Fire
    - iii. Human Resources
    - iv. Information Technology
    - v. Office of Management & Budget
    - vi. Police
  - 2 Chief Financial Officer (CFO)-
    - i. Capital Improvement Program
    - ii. Comptroller's Office
    - iii. Streets and Maintenance (SAM)
    - iv. Environmental Services
    - v. Health
    - vi. Purchasing
    - vii. Tax Office

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- 3 Managing Directors
  - i. Convention & Performing Arts Center
  - ii. Libraries
  - iii. Museums & Cultural Affairs
  - iv. Parks & Recreation / Parks Maintenance
  - v. Zoo
  - vi. Airport
  - vii. Community Development
  - viii. Economic Development
  - ix. Planning & Inspections
  - x. International Bridges
- 4 Assistant to the City Manager
  - i. Mass Transit – Sun Metro
  - ii. Municipal/City Clerk

- C. All travel requests should be signed off by the individuals in the top management prior to the travel and after the travel (reconciliations) for the departments that report to them.
- D. Indication of above approvals can be documented by signature on the Travel Request or by E-mail. E-mail must include documentation of purpose, funding source, and detailed breakdown of costs (i.e., airfare, hotel, per diem). E-mail approval must be attached to the Travel Request Form.
- F. All travel to Arizona, regardless of purpose, cost or funding source, is to be routed through the City Manager's Office for approval PRIOR TO travel. Only upon consent received through the City Manager's office should travel be booked.
- G. When **two** or more individuals are traveling to the same conference or for the same purpose or event, the top management positions listed above must approve the travel prior to. Justification of the travel should accompany request. An E-mail indicating approval from the top management positions will suffice if attached to the actual travel request.

Travel shall be approved only to transact official business, attend official and professional meetings, and participate in conferences and training sessions necessary to promote the efficient conduct of the City's affairs. Approved travel also applies to "No cost" travel as off-duty hours are part of oversight.

Departments should examine travel destinations to ensure that travel is to destinations, which are in closest proximity to the City. If there are seminars, conferences, etc., scheduled throughout the year at various locations and the determination is made to have an employee attend, choose the location closest to El Paso.

The mode of travel wherever feasible shall be air travel by commercial carrier and shall be the most economical available, but in any event shall never exceed coach fare by air. A cost analysis may be prepared to ensure that the travel shall be the most economical available and where various options exist, the chosen option shall be the most economical as demonstrated by the analysis.

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Videoconferencing should be utilized to the extent possible. For example, if a webinar is available versus a live group environment, the webinar should be utilized instead of the live group environment.

Transportation and registration expenses incurred pursuant to an approved Travel Request shall be paid on the basis of actual costs. Lodging accommodations may be paid by per diem or actual cost of conference hotel as authorized by the Department Head. All other usual travel expenses will be paid on the basis of a per diem allowance.

The City shall not pay expenses resulting from indirect routes of travel and arriving earlier and leaving later than necessary to conduct official business. Adjustments must be made for any of these types of expenses to ensure that the City is not incurring these types of costs.

Vacation may be taken in conjunction with travel on official business at no additional cost to the City provided this fact is specifically indicated on the face of the Travel Request and is approved by the Department Head. The necessary paperwork (i.e. Human Resources leave forms) must be submitted in conjunction with the travel.

When a spouse or other members of an employee's family attend a conference or meeting, none of their expenses shall be borne by the City. The employee may not charge these expenses to the City either through a P-card or an advance. These costs should be incurred by the employee and the Travel Request shall reflect only those expenses incurred by the employee.

In instances where use of personal automobile is allowed for the convenience of the employee, lodging, meals, and other expenses will be allowed on the same basis as if the employee had traveled by air. Travel time will also be allowed on the same basis as if the employee had traveled by air. The employee will charge the City only the time that would have been required to make the trip using airline transportation. All time used in excess of air travel time shall be charged to employee leave time.

Travel requests should indicate the number of hours the employee is away from the duty station. Do not include weekend hours unless employee normally works on the weekend. The amount of time lost from regular City duties shall be considered in determining the mode of travel.

All travel requests should be screened to limit trips, number of individuals traveling, points to be visited, itineraries, and durations to those that are essential to the performance of department mission.

Departments may also limit the amount of costs allowable on the trips due to budgetary and other constraints. Allowable costs are only those authorized as documented on the Travel Request executed for each trip.

Departments should retain all files and forms related to trips authorized by the Department in good order and easily accessible in the event of an audit by the City's internal audit or external auditor as requested by the City Manager.

Travel agencies should not be used for domestic travel. If traveling overseas booking the trip through a travel agency, provide analysis substantiating the use of travel agent is the most economical method.

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Include documentation to substantiate each expense listed in the Travel Request.

## **5.0 Methods of Payments for Travel**

Generally, there are three different ways to pay for travel expenses. A combination of these three methods can be used; any or all methods can be used to accommodate the travel expenses for employees. Regardless, however, of the method(s) used, they must be reconciled in accordance with Section 13 of this manual. The reconciliation process is critical to ensuring that all payment methods are reconciled at the completion of a travel. In addition, original receipts should be maintained for all expenses incurred.

Once a Travel Request has been approved, costs may be incurred using the following three methods:

1. P-Card
2. Departmental vouchering process
3. Travel advance

### **5.1 P-Card**

The P-Card method is the preferred method of payment for all travel expenses. All registration, conference fees, airline and car reservations, and hotel accommodations should be made using the P-Card. These expenses may be charged by the Central Booking Agent as defined in Section 14.1 of this manual or by individual P-Card holders. If more than one individual is traveling, one P-Card holder may book all travel for the group to his/her P-Card to expedite the travel process. This needs to be adequately documented in all of the corresponding related Travel Request(s). This should be approved by the Department Head on the Travel Request.

The City receives a rebate on the P-Card processing fees which should be maximized by using the P-Card to pay for travel expenses when possible.

Since the P-card program has been implemented, departments should not use any "Ghost Cards". This has been a prior practice and should be discontinued immediately.

Per Diem and other costs may also be reimbursed to the employee through the Out-of-Pocket module in the P-card system. These types of costs should only be reimbursed at the completion of a trip and in conjunction with the reconciliation of the Travel Request.

### **5.2 Departmental vouchering process**

In the event that a P-Card is not acceptable method of payment, the next preferred method is the Departmental vouchering process. This requires the Department to process a voucher (i.e. check) for the registration and other costs. All supporting original documentation should be retained with the voucher with a COPY attached to the completed, approved Travel Request. A purchase order may also be issued and provided to the employee to hand-deliver to the organization as deemed appropriate.

Since all travel requests should be approved in advance of the travel, the voucher should be processed and approved with ample time to avoid asking for a last minute check from Office of the Comptroller department. Last minute requests for payments will not be approved.

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### 5.3 Travel Advance

A travel advance may be prepared and processed through the Departmental vouchering process as indicated in 5.2 above. Travel advances are authorized on the basis of an approved Travel Request. Generally, travel advances will be made for hotel and meal per diem allowances. It is rare that a travel advance is made for the registration and/or seminar costs.

In lieu of a travel advance, employees with P-cards should consider a reimbursement through the P-card's Out-of-Pocket reimbursement system. See Section 13.0 for specific instructions regarding reimbursement.

## 6.0 Local Travel/Training (Intra-City)

- 6.1 Actual cost for registration fees (and meals if included in fee) at conference or meetings when attendance is approved in advance and is a requirement of the job or in the interest of the City because of essential information. Lunches for local travel/training outside of those included in the registration fee are not allowed unless strictly authorized by the department.
- 6.2 If a city vehicle is available for use, employees **must** use this method of transportation rather than a personal vehicle unless employee receives a monthly allowance for gasoline or a car allowance as described in Section 6.3 of this Manual. In instances where use of a personal vehicle is required, the employee will be reimbursed at the latest amount set by the Internal Revenues Service. When a personal vehicle is used for the convenience of the employee and approved by the Department Head, reimbursement will be at the latest amount established by the Internal Revenue Service.
- 6.3 City employees who receive a monthly allowance for gasoline or a car allowance shall not be entitled to receive any reimbursement for local travel expenses in addition to the said gasoline or car allowance, and is prohibited from driving city-owned vehicles for other than emergency purposes.
- 6.4 Generally, a Travel Request Form is not necessary when traveling within the boundaries of the City of El Paso.
- 6.5 In any event, no payment will be made for travel expenses between a City employee residence and the assigned place of work. For example, if an employee drives from his place of residence directly to the location where the conference is being held and back to his residency, no payment shall be made.

## 7.0 Travel Other than Local

All travel other than local shall necessitate a written document indicating approval. The City utilizes the Travel Request Form, or "Travel Request" to document such approval. A Travel Request must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the guidelines in this Manual. See Section 13.0 of this Manual for specific instructions on filling out the Travel Request. No reimbursements for any travel will be made unless this form is filled out in its entirety and appropriate signatures have been obtained.

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A Department Head or budget authority shall approve all Travel Requests. In the case of the City Manager, the Mayor will approve the travel.

In the case of the Mayor and the City Council, the City Manager or his/her designee will review the travel. This review will be to ascertain the municipal purpose of travel; however, it is generally the responsibility of each member of Council and the Mayor to ensure that the travel is for such a purpose.

#### 7.1 Prior to Travel

A Travel Request must be submitted in advance of the travel. Each department is required to establish guidelines regarding this timeline.

All Travel should be booked at least **ten (10) days** in advance of the traveling in order minimize the cost of the airfare. Extra fees such as early check-ins, upgraded etc. are not allowed.

#### 7.2 After Travel

After each travel, the Travel Request reconciliation shall be completed within ten (10) working days after the conclusion of the travel.

### 8.0 Registration Fees

Requests for attendance at conferences, training sessions, or other meetings, must be supported by a program or other evidence of the opening and closing dates and times, the fee rate, location, and meals that are included. The Department shall not pay for expenses for registration or tuition which are not allowed or are considered unreasonable. Registration costs are authorized to the extent necessary to transact official business; expenses of "tour packages," "golf excursions" or any other similar, extra-curricular activities offered in connection with conference registration are not allowed.

It is preferred that registration fees be paid directly by the Department Central Booking Agent using an issued P-Card to the sponsoring organization if feasible. The next preferred method is through the departmental vouchering process. A purchase order may also be issued to the employee and payment may be made from an invoice. Regardless of payment method, a receipt should document the amount of monies paid for the registration fee.

If none of these options exists, the registration fee will be advanced to the employee and it will be his/her responsibility to pay the vendor. A receipt or some other proof of the fee payment shall be submitted with the Travel Request reconciliation when the fee is paid by the employee out of advanced funds.

### 9.0 Transportation

#### 9.1 Commercial Air Transportation

All commercial air transportation reservations shall be processed according to the following procedure:

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- a. Travel should be planned sufficiently in advance to take advantage of reduced fares. Pricing may be obtained from the Internet, telephone or other means to be determined as the most expedient and most cost effective way to purchase the airfare.
- b. Coach fare shall be considered standard for air travel, however, the most economical available shall be utilized, i.e., discount fares where feasible.
- c. Tickets purchased from the Internet should be sent to the Department requesting the airline tickets.
- d. If a situation arises that during travel additional fees or fares are incurred they must be substantiated by a receipt and written justification, and will be subject to approval as provided.

## 9.2 Vehicular Transportation

All vehicular transportation shall comply with the following:

- a. Travel in a City vehicle may be authorized if it is in the best interest of the City considering such factors as time required, destination, travel distance, and number of persons in the travel.
- b. Travel by personal vehicle for City business, at the reimbursement rate of the latest amount established by the Internal Revenue Service per mile, may be authorized if commercial transportation is not practical and a City vehicle is not available. Travel by personal vehicle for the convenience of the employee is reimbursable at the latest amount established by the Internal Revenue Service. Odometer readings from employee's residence or official work site (whichever is shorter distance) to final destination and return should be used to calculate mileage. Internet sites, such as MapQuest.com may be used to calculate mileage. However, the reimbursement shall not exceed the least expensive coach fare available, at the time of travel, as stated previously.
- c. When authorized, car rental reservations should be made by the Department or individual traveling in advance. A rental car may be authorized when determined to be necessary. "Necessary" is defined as a rental car is needed to conduct official business and other alternatives, such as public transportation, are either more costly or impractical due to the exigency of travel. Generally, a car rental should not exceed the full-size option and should be the most economical option available. Luxury vehicle are not considered an appropriate option unless there is specific justification for the rental. Insurance should be purchased from the rental car agency when personal insurance companies will not insure a driver using a rental car and must be supported by the receipt. Taxes associated to the car rental are allowable expenses. The City is exempt from Texas Sales Tax. See Appendix B Texas Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification and Appendix C Motor Vehicle Rental Tax Exemption Certificate. Gasoline is considered an allowed expense. Travelers should not prepay for fuel. Fuel cost shall be actual costs substantiated with receipts. Travelers should fill up rental car gas tanks prior to returning to the agency in order to avoid exorbitant fuel charges. Gas receipts are to be submitted with the Travel Request Form when reconciling the form after the travel. Rental Cars are generally not an authorized expense if employee's

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lodging is at conference hotel.

- d. Parking fees are considered an allowed expense for travel other than local.
- e. Traveler should not use valet parking, unless self-parking is not available.
- f. Vehicle insurance Information
  - 1. Liability Insurance
  - 2. Physical Insurance

### 9.3 Ground Transportation

Ground transportation shall be only for what is considered reasonable and necessary and must be supported by actual receipts. This includes expenses for use of taxis or airport limousine in connection with travel. It should be noted that most hotels provide a shuttle service to and from the airport free of charge.

## 10.0 Lodging/Hotel Accommodations

The allowance for lodging must be determined from information provided by the hotel when reservations are made, unless otherwise approved by the City Manager, the Chief Financial Officer or the Chief Performance Officer in emergency travel situation. Such approval must be obtained in advance except for circumstances beyond the control of the employee and must be supported by actual receipts. The actual cost of the hotel room may include various taxes. The City is not exempt from hotel taxes.

The City shall pay the actual cost of hotel room or use the basis of per diem as outlined in the GSA Schedules. When traveling abroad or outside of the continental United States, per diem rates for foreign travel will apply, otherwise use the domestic rates listed. In the case of the City paying for the actual cost, the room rate must be substantiated by an original hotel issued receipt that indicated all charges and payments credited. Reimbursement using the Per Diem rates need not have supporting receipts. Either method should be documented on the Travel Request.

When actual costs exceed GSA rates, approval from top management shall be obtained prior to travel. Include an analysis along with other Travel Request documentation comparing the methods of travel and select the most economical method available. See Appendix D for example.

## 11.0 Meals

The City will only reimburse for meals using the most current GSA Schedule and is the maximum amount that will be reimbursed. To determine the maximum per diem allowance, use the most current applicable Federal Register for that specific geographical destination. When traveling abroad or outside of the continental United States, per diem rates for foreign travel will apply, otherwise use the domestic rates listed. These schedules can be found at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). Click on "Per Diem rates."

Per Diem allowance for meals shall be pro-rated for the day of departure and the day of return according to GSA guideline, currently 75% for both days.

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Meals included in registration fees, or provided by another agency should be deducted from the per diem reimbursement allowance (except for medical, dietary, or religious reasons as outlined in the GSA regulations).

Include a schedule of per diem calculation per day along with a print out of per diem rate from [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov).

#### 11.1 Food and Beverage Policy

In order to ensure that the Food and Beverage Policy as approved by the City Manager is also adhered to during travel and related activities, it is included in this section of the manual. It is excerpted in its entirety as follows:

##### **Section I – Allowable expenses**

Elected Officials and Department Heads may use their discretion in authorizing limited purchases of food, beverages and meals for specific municipal purposes with City Funds. If a meal is an integral part of a function, then it is up to the Department Head to make a determination that the meal is allowable. Food, beverages and meals may be purchased in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Items must be purchased for authorized “events” that serve a municipal purpose. Appropriate events include but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Parks dedication ceremony
  - b. City-recognized board meeting
  - c. City-sponsored awards presentation
  - d. Scheduled staff training session
  - e. Testing sessions where volunteer assessors and employees are not released for breaks or meal times
  - f. Council and Staff meetings held during normal meal hours where employees are not released from work
  - g. Expenses may be authorized to pay for meals for officials, dignitaries and others invited to City events, as authorized by the Department Head.
  - h. Expenses must adhere to City’s procurement, P-card and Travel Policy guidelines as outlined in the respective manuals.
2. Funds may only be used if budgeted
  - a. Only the funded food and beverage account (503115) may be used with the exception of discretionary funds as outlined in Section III below.
  - b. Prior to a purchase using petty cash or the P-card, the budget must be in the appropriate account.
3. Items may be purchased through the City’s vouchering process, petty cash or using the City’s P-card. All procedures are documented in the City’s purchasing, petty cash and P-card manuals and should be followed accordingly. **IF USING A CITY P-CARD FOR FOOD, BEVERAGE AND MEAL PURCHASES, THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORIZATION MUST BE RECEIVED PRIOR TO USING THE P-CARD.** Regardless of the method used, receipts must be retained in order to document the specific municipal purposes.

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- a. In accordance with the P-Card manual, P-Card holders must submit receipts on a timely basis. If food, beverage and meal expense receipts are not turned in on time, they will be specifically disallowed and individuals will have ten days to reimburse the City for these expenses. Failure to do so will result in the loss of P-card privileges indefinitely and individuals will have their paycheck garnished for the amount owed.

## **Section II – Non-allowable expenses**

City staff is prohibited from using City funds for any personal financial gain. The following must be adhered to:

1. Individuals are not permitted to use City funds, P-cards or petty cash in El Paso area restaurants for their personal meal regardless of function unless the meal is an integral part of the function.
2. Individuals may not seek reimbursement for meals for family members or non-business related guests.
3. Under no circumstances are City funds to be used for the purchase of alcoholic beverages, unless otherwise allowed by City ordinance.
4. Purchases of bottled water are disallowable unless a municipal purpose is specifically identified.
5. City employees are not to establish working lunches where the City pays for the meal unless meeting the event conditions specified in I-1 above.
6. Meals where only City employees are present unless meeting the “event” conditions specified in I-1 above.

## **Section III - Discretionary Funds**

In addition to the above requirements specifically outlined in Sections I and II, Mayor and Council are prohibited from using their discretionary funds for purchasing food locally unless it is for a specific municipal purchase as outlined in Section I above.

Discretionary funds should generally not be used for local meals and entertainment purposes since Mayor and Council representatives receive an expense allowance for these types of purposes. For example, a meal between a representative and a constituent or vendor should not be paid out of discretionary funds. See the Administrative Policy on the use of Discretionary Funds.

Additionally, P-Cards should be used mainly for travel and related-travel expenses. Meals for travel can be purchased in accordance with the City’s travel policy.

## **Section III – Non-compliance**

Individuals violating this policy may be:

1. Required to reimburse the City for unauthorized personal expenses. If an individual

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fails to reimburse the City for unauthorized personal expenses upon request, the following will apply:

- a. Possible permanent loss of use of P-Card
- b. Garnishment from paycheck.

2. Subject to disciplinary action up to suspension or possible termination.

#### **Section IV – Other issues**

Adequate documentation must support all expenses, regardless of method of payment (i.e. P-card, voucher or petty cash reimbursement). An adequate description must be written on the face of every receipt to ensure that it may be easily identifiable as a City-related business purpose. For example, a description of the meeting date, purpose and attendees should be written on the face of the receipt. Any P-card purchases without sufficient documentation will be deemed disallowable and the provisions of Section III-Non-compliance will apply.

All actual receipts for food and beverages must be retained by the department and be specific and detailed in nature to determine the actual items being purchased. For example, a receipt from a restaurant should be detailed to determine amount of meal, meal type purchased, and beverages purchased.

### **12.0 Other Expenses**

#### **12.1 Long Distance Telephone Calls While Traveling**

Telephone calls shall be for what is reasonable and necessary, only for official City business and must be supported by appropriate documentations relative to cost and purchase and with the approval of the Department Head. Long distance telephone charges will be allowed for official business calls and will be governed by the following:

- 12.1.a. Calls to City offices shall be made on a collect call basis; all other business related calls to locations other than City offices shall be paid by the employee, who will be reimbursed upon submission of appropriate documentation relative to cost and purpose and with the approval of the Department Head.
- 12.1.b. Calls for other than City business shall not be made at City expense. One (1) telephone call to the employee's family indicating a safe arrival is permissible for reimbursement.

#### **12.2 Miscellaneous Expenses**

Other miscellaneous expenses shall be submitted along with the original receipts and are subject to approval if they were not documented on the original, approved Travel Request Form. No unauthorized expenses or payments shall be made for such expenditures as entertainment or for items that fall under City procurement guidelines. Items such as alcoholic beverages, dry cleaning service or any other personal service are not considered allowable and are not reimbursable.

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**In no event** should an employee incur an expense while traveling over the \$3,000 small-purchase threshold. Expenses above this amount should be referred to the Departmental level for handling.

The per diem rates established in the GSA regulations provide for \$5 per day for tips and incidental; receipts are not required for this \$5 rate tips and incidental costs provided in the per diem rate.

If miscellaneous expenses are charged to an individual's P-card, these expenses will be reconciled at the time of the monthly P-card reconciliation and copies attached and noted on the approved Travel Request Form.

If a cardholder needs to purchase an item with personal cash, there are two ways to get reimbursed by the City. The first is to include this in the Travel Request reconciliation process and request the amount through the departmental vouchering process.

The second method is to enter this information in the 'Out of Pocket' expense section of the P-Card statement. The OOP module is designed for DEBIT only, which means that at the end of each P-Card cycle, a DEBIT will be provided to an individual's checking account.

### 13.0 Travel Request Preparation and Reconciliation

**The most important procedure related to travel is the Travel Request and its preparation and reconciliation.** The Travel Request is a form prescribed by OMB and the Office of the Comptroller Department that is prepared either by a Central Booking Agent or an individual and submitted for approval to the authorizing Department Head, which is subsequently used for Expense Reconciliation.

As defined in Section 3.0 of this manual, an "Open" Travel Request is one that is considered "open" when an expense report has not been filed with the Department Head and any refund of travel advance due the City or reimbursement due the employee has **not** been paid. A "Closed" Travel Request is an authorized Travel Request is considered "closed" when an expense report has been filed, reconciled and any refund of travel advance due the City or reimbursement due the employee has been paid. Only after a Travel Request is closed may it be filed for audit review purposes and is considered complete at the department level.

#### 13.1 Travel Request Preparation

To open a Travel Request, an employee submits a Travel Request for travel to the Department Head for approval. One Travel Request form is to be used per employee. The following basic information is necessary in order to complete an Open Travel Request:

- ☐ Name of employee traveling
- ☐ Employee's Identification Number
- ☐ Position or Title of Employee traveling
- ☐ Date submitted for approval
- ☐ Originating location of travel (usually City of El Paso)
- ☐ Final destination

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- ☐ Times and dates of the trips
- ☐ Total number of hours away from duty
- ☐ Indication of intra-City travel

After the basic information is completed, the Travel Request should list all of the expenses that will be incurred as a result of the travel requested. Transportation, lodging, meals, registration costs and any other anticipated expenses should be listed on the Travel Request. Expenses requested should be in accordance with the policies outlined in this manual.

After approval and **ONLY** after approval, expenses can be paid for in three ways:

1. Expenses can be paid through the P-Card.
2. Expenses can be paid through the Department's vouchering process system.
3. A travel advance can be made to the employee traveling.

#### 13.1.1 P-Card charges

Generally, the P-Card should be used to pay for expenses such as registration fees, airfare, rental car charges, gas charges and lodging. Meals may be charged, however, these charges must NOT exceed the per diem limits allowed by the policies outlined in this manual. See Section 11.0 – Meals in this manual. If meals are charged, the reconciliation process is even more critical to the process.

For expenses incurred out-of-pocket such as meals and for which no travel advance has been provided, employees should enter per diem or actual receipts (to the extent allowed by the Travel Request) in the P-Card OOPs module. Reimbursements through the OOPS module are submitted through a batch file of ACH on the midnight of the last day of the approval period. It will take 4-5 business days to reimburse the user's account.

#### 13.1.2 Payments through Departmental Voucher (including Advances)

For payments through the Department's voucher system, the original receipts for lodging, transportation, and registration fees shall be retained with the voucher. A COPY of the voucher and the receipts shall be attached to the Travel Request and noted in the space provided on the Travel Form. The voucher number and amount should be listed in the Estimated Expenses Column under PAID DIRECTLY TO VENDOR THROUGH VOUCHER.

Any advance shall also be listed under the AMOUNTS PAID TO EMPLOYEE column under Estimated Expenses on the Travel Request form. A copy of the Travel Request should be attached to the Original Voucher requesting the advance. A copy of the voucher and check should be attached to the Travel Request.

Travel advances will **not** be made in the following circumstances:

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1. No travel advances shall be made to employees who have a prior "Open" Travel Request. Such Open Travel Request is a failure to file the required Expense Report(s) and/or repay the unused portion of any travel advance within the ten (10) days after the conclusion of travel, unless such delay has been authorized by the City Manager, or designee.
2. Travel advance is less than \$50.00 for the employee traveling. Employees will be reimbursed at the end of the trip when the Travel Request is reconciled.

### 13.2 Final Reconciliation

After the trip has been completed, employees should complete the "Expense Report" section of the Travel Request and provide all receipts necessary to Close Travel Request.

The employee should determine the amount due to the City or from the City to the employee. If funds are due to the City (i.e. if the advance exceeds expenses reimbursable under provisions of this directive or in the event of the cancellation or indefinite postponement of travel for which an expense advance has been issued), monies due the City shall be paid within ten (10) days to the Department's Central Booking Agent. The employee should submit a check or cash for the amount due **in full**.

If reimbursement is due, a check may be issued directly to the traveler or the reimbursement can be made through the P-Card's OOPs module as indicated in 13.1 above. Reimbursements under \$1.00 will not be necessary. If an employee does not wish to receive a reimbursement, then that must be indicated on the reconciliation.

The Department shall retain the applicable Travel Request along with all related documentation for audit purposes. The Travel Request will then be considered closed.

## 14.0 Responsibilities of the Department

Department Heads **should establish and maintain internal travel Procedures and or guidelines** in order to manage travel more efficiently within their department. Any additional guidelines may not be less stringent than those outlined in this manual.

It is the Department's sole responsibility to ascertain that funding is available for travel Incurred by their employees as well as for travel of others traveling on departmental business.

It is the Department's responsibility to ensure that both the Department Head and the Assistant Department Head are not absent from the Department at the same time or arrangements have been made to ensure coverage at the department level.

### 14.1 Central Booking Agent

Departments may designate an employee as a Central Booking Agent in order to centralize all travel for employees within the department. The Central Booking Agent will handle all travel and may be issued a P-Card through the Financial Services Department to conduct travel transactions such as airline reservations, hotel

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accommodations, etc. The Central Booking Agent should ensure that sufficient purchasing authorization as well as travel authorization is set up for use on the assigned P-Card. Refer to the P-Card Manual for specific procedures on the use of the P-Card. All authorized P-Cardholders agree to abide by the guidelines set out by the P-Card manual, and all other City procurement policies and procedures.

The Central Booking Agent must also have access to the PeopleSoft Financials system in order to determine if adequate funding is available PRIOR to the approval and authorization of the travel. The necessary budget transfers should be processed prior to the travel to ensure funding availability.

The Central Booking Agent MUST fill-out a Travel Request Form for each individual who is traveling and must obtain approval from the Department Head or budget authority prior to finalizing and incurring costs on behalf of the City. All Travel Request Forms should be maintained in a central location for audit purposes.

#### 14.2 Individually-managed Travel

Employees may also be allowed to handle travel arrangements on an individual basis. Employees that travel MUST fill out and submit a Travel Request Form prior to making reservations. Generally, an estimate of the costs of the trip should be submitted to the department head or budget authority for advance approval. It is the Department's responsibility to determine whether there are sufficient funds in the accounts prior to approving the travel. Only after approval has been obtained, should an employee proceed with incurring actual costs for the trip.

Employees that travel should request a P-Card to be issued under the City's P-Card procedures. The employee (traveler) will need to gain P-Card authorization 4 weeks prior to the expected departure date. All authorized P-Cardholders agree to abide by the guidelines set out by the City of El Paso P-card Manual, the City of El Paso Procurement Manual, and all other City policies and procedures.

### 15.0 Travel Reimbursement from outside agencies

- 15.1 In the event that an employee received a reimbursement for any part of the travel in which the payment was made payable to the employee and the employee has already been compensated for those travel expenses by the City of El Paso, those funds received should be returned to the City immediately. Notify your Central Booking Agent and provide a copy the travel reconciliation to reference the travel information along with the payment.

Funds should be deposited immediately. Under no circumstances should the employee keep the monies paid to them by the outside agency. While the City pays for the employee's cost of traveling on official City business, the City is given the right to all reimbursements from the outside agencies for travel related costs. If an individual fails to return the funds and fails to adhere to this policy the following may apply:

- a. Garnishment from paycheck
- b. Subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

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# **Appendix A**

## **Travel Request Form**

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CITY OF EL PASO TRAVEL REQUEST						
At Least 15 Working Days PRIOR to Travel, Complete Form and Submit To: Department Head Within 10 Days AFTER Return Attach All Receipts and Submit To: Department Head						
NAME:		EMPLOYEE NO.	POSITION/TITLE:	DEPARTMENT:	DATE SUBMITTED:	
PURPOSE OF TRAVEL:			IS VACATION/LEAVE TO BE COMBINED WITH TRAVEL? [ ] Yes [ ] No		HOURS AWAY FROM DUTY:	
<b>DEPARTING LOCATION:</b>						
From:			Date and Hour - Departure			
To:			Date and Hour - Arrival			
<b>FINAL DESTINATION:</b>						
From:			Date and Hour - Departure			
To:			Date and Hour - Arrival			
ITEM		Prior to travel fill out ESTIMATED EXPENSES			After return fill out EXPENSE REPORT	
		Expenses to be paid by P-Card	To Be Paid Directly to Vendor through Voucher	Amounts to be Paid by Employee	Expenses paid by P-Card	Paid Directly to Vendor through Voucher
<b>1 TRANSPORTATION:</b>						
Airfare		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Vehicle [ ] City [ ] Personal		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Miles:						
Rental Car		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Shuttle/Taxi		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>2 LODGING AND MEALS:</b>						
Hotel [ ] Per Diem [ ] Actual		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
# Nights _____ Rate: \$/night _____						
Meals & Incidental Expenses:		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
# Days _____ Rate: \$/day _____						
<b>3 REGISTRATION COSTS:</b>						
Total Cost of Seminar/Registration fees (attach copy of agenda)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>4 OTHER:</b>						
(Describe):		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Column Total		(1)	(2)	(3) Advance request	(4)	(5)
		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Sum of Total Columns (1 + 2 + 3)				\$ -	Sum of Total Columns (4 + 5 + 6) \$ -	
Account/Fund/DeptID/Class/Grant or Project :					<b>Final Payment Reconciliation:</b> Amount owed to City (3 - 6) \$ - Amount owed to Employee (6 - 3) \$ -	
<b>APPROVALS PRIOR TO TRAVEL:</b>					GSA Website for hotel and meals per diem;  <a href="http://www.gsa.gov">www.gsa.gov</a>  <b>NOTE:</b> Receipts are required for ALL expenditures (excluding payments for per diem)	
Employee * :			Date:			
Department Head/Budget Authority:			Date:			
CPO, CFO, Managing Director, or Asst. to CM, if applicable:			Date:			
<b>APPROVALS AFTER TRAVEL:</b>						
Employee * :			Date:			
Department Head/Budget Authority:			Date:			
CPO, CFO, Managing Director, or Asst. to CM, if applicable:			Date:			
* Employee signature indicates knowledge of, and agreement with, all provisions of the Travel Manual. <span style="float: right;">COEP, Travel Request Form, Revised 6/8/15</span>						

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**Appendix B**  
**Texas Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification**

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## Texas Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certification

This certificate does not require a number to be valid.

Name of purchaser, firm or agency <b>City of El Paso</b>	
Address (Street & number, P.O. Box or Route number) <b>300 N. Campbell Street</b>	Phone (Area code and number) <b>(915) 212-0040</b>
City, State, ZIP code <b>El Paso, TX 79901-1153</b>	

I, the purchaser named above, claim an exemption from payment of sales and use taxes (for the purchase of taxable items described below or on the attached order or invoice) from:

Seller: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, ZIP code: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of items to be purchased or on the attached order or invoice:

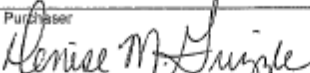
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Purchaser claims this exemption for the following reason:

**The City of El Paso is a municipality and political subdivision of the State of Texas and thereby exempt from state and local government sales / sue taxes and federal income taxes. IAW State Comptroller Ruling §3.322 dated June 18, 1986**

I understand that I will be liable for payment of all state and local sales or use taxes which may become due for failure to comply with the provisions of the Tax Code and/or all applicable law.

*I understand that it is a criminal offense to give an exemption certificate to the seller for taxable items that I know, at the time of purchase, will be used in a manner other than that expressed in this certificate, and depending on the amount of tax evaded, the offense may range from a Class C misdemeanor to a felony of the second degree.*

sign here	Purchaser 	Title Comptroller	Date 8/7/14
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NOTE: This certificate cannot be issued for the purchase, lease, or rental of a motor vehicle.

**THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT REQUIRE A NUMBER TO BE VALID.**

Sales and Use Tax "Exemption Numbers" or "Tax Exempt" Numbers do not exist.

<b>This certificate should be furnished to the supplier.</b>
<b>Do <u>not</u> send the completed certificate to the Comptroller of Public Accounts.</b>

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**Appendix C**  
**Motor Vehicle Rental Tax Exemption Certificate**

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# Motor Vehicle Rental Tax Exemption Certificate

*This certificate is not valid for tax-free registration. This exemption certificate must be attached to the rental contract.*

Make of vehicle		Motor or vehicle identification number
Model year	Body style	License plate number

The undersigned claims exemption from payment of motor vehicle gross rental receipts tax under the Taxes on Sale, Rental and Use of Motor Vehicle Law (TEX. TAX CODE ANN. ch 152), on the rental of the above described motor vehicle from:

Name of rental company		
Address (Street and number)		
City	State	ZIP code

Renter claims this exemption for the following reasons:

- ☐ **Childcare Facilities** - Motor vehicles used or rented by a qualified residential childcare facility and used primarily to transport children residing at the facility are exempt from motor vehicle rental tax. A qualifying residential childcare facility is a facility that is licensed by Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) under Human Resources Code Chapter 42 to provide residential care 24 hours a day and provides this care in a single residential group to children who do not require specialized services or treatment and to children who are emotionally disturbed. For the motor vehicle rental tax exemption, the DFPS license will state one of the following types of qualifying residential childcare facility:

- independent foster group home
- independent foster family home
- institution providing basic care
- institution serving mentally retarded children
- emergency shelter
- residential treatment center
- therapeutic camp
- child-placing agency that directly provides residential childcare

- ☐ **Churches or Religious Societies** - A qualified church or religious society is exempt from paying motor vehicle rental tax only if the motor vehicle is designed to carry more than six passengers and used primarily (at least 80 percent of the time) to provide transportation to and from church or religious services or meetings. A qualified church or religious society is an organized group of people regularly associating for the sole purpose of holding, conducting and sponsoring religious worship according to the rites of the group.

- ☐ **Farm Trailers and Other Farm Vehicles** - Farm machines, trailers and semi-trailers used primarily (at least 80 percent of the time) for farming and ranching, including the raising of poultry and operation of feedlots, are exempt from motor vehicle rental tax. The qualified farm trailer/vehicle must be used on a farm or ranch in the production of crops, livestock or other agricultural products to be sold in the regular course of business. A farm or ranch includes a dairy farm, commercial orchard, commercial greenhouse, feedlot or a similar commercial agricultural operation that is the original producer of agricultural products. Beginning Jan. 1, 2012, renters must provide an Ag/Timber Number issued by the Comptroller in order to claim this exemption. Tax is due if renter does not have an Ag/Timber Number. For more information, go to [www.GetReadyTexas.org](http://www.GetReadyTexas.org).

Ag/Timber Number issued by the Comptroller of Public Accounts: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ **Public Agencies** - A public agency is exempt from motor vehicle rental tax. A public agency includes the federal government; a department, commission, board, office, institution or other agency of the state of Texas or of a county, city, town, school district, hospital district, water district or other special district, authority or political subdivision created by or pursuant to the constitution or the statutes of this state. An organization may receive federal or state funds and still not be entitled to an exemption from motor vehicle rental tax.

- ☐ **Rentals for Re-Rental** - An entity in the business of renting motor vehicles may rent a vehicle tax free to hold for re-rental.

Rental permit number issued to re-rental company by the Comptroller of Public Accounts: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ **Timber Operations** - Timber machines and trailers used primarily (at least 80 percent of the time) in timber operations are exempt from motor vehicle rental tax. A "timber machine" is a self-propelled motor vehicle specially adapted to perform a specialized function for use primarily in timber operations. Timber machines and trailers qualify for exemption if they are used in the production of timber, including land preparation, planting, maintenance and gathering of trees commonly grown for commercial timber. Beginning Jan. 1, 2012, renters must provide an Ag/Timber Number issued by the Comptroller in order to claim this exemption. Tax is due if renter does not have an Ag/Timber Number. For more information, go to [www.GetReadyTexas.org](http://www.GetReadyTexas.org).

Ag/Timber Number issued by the Comptroller of Public Accounts: \_\_\_\_\_

I declare that the information contained in this document and any attachments is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.		
Name of tax-exempt person or organization		
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-right: 5px;"> <b>sign here</b> </div> <div>Authorized person</div> </div>		
Address (Street and number or P.O. Box number)		
City	State	ZIP code

*NOTE: This form may be reproduced, but must be substantially in the form set out above.  
Do NOT send the completed exemption certificate to the Comptroller of Public Accounts. See instructions on front of form.*

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## Motor Vehicle Verification Certificate for Rental Tax

*This certificate is not valid for tax-free registration. This certificate must be retained for tax verification purposes.*

### Section I. Rent for Re-Rental: Verification of Gross Rental Receipts Tax Collected in Texas

*To be completed by renter re-renting a motor vehicle and furnished to title owner of motor vehicle. Indicate the total amount of gross rental receipts tax collected and paid to the state Comptroller. This amount can be used as a credit toward satisfying the minimum gross rental receipts tax liability of the title owner. This certificate is retained by the title owner.*

Make of vehicle		Motor or vehicle identification number	
Model year	Body style	License plate number	
I certify that I hold Motor Vehicle Rental Permit No. _____, that I have rented the vehicle described above for the purpose of re-rental and that I have collected and paid to the Comptroller gross rental receipts taxes in the amount of \$ _____ for the period _____ (Month and day) _____ (Year) to _____ (Month and day) _____ (Year).			
I declare that the information contained in this document and any attachments is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and this information can be verified by audit of my records by the Comptroller of Public Accounts.			
Name of renter		sign here	
Address (Street and number or P.O. Box number)			
City	State	ZIP code	

### Section II. Reimbursement of Sales or Use Tax Verification

*To be completed by title owner when a vehicle is rented for re-rental and the renter reimburses the owner for the sales or use tax paid at registration. This certificate is retained by the renter.*

Make of vehicle		Motor or vehicle identification number	
Model year	Body style	License plate number	
I certify that I paid sales or use tax in the amount of \$ _____ at the time of registration on the above described motor vehicle, that I have collected gross rental receipts tax in the amount of \$ _____ on the gross rental receipts received from renting the above described motor vehicle and that I have contracted and received reimbursement in the amount of \$ _____ from the re-renter named (below).			
Name of re-renter:		Taxpayer ID:	
Street address:			
City:		State:	ZIP code:
I declare that the information contained in this document and any attachments is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and this information can be verified by audit of my records by the Comptroller of Public Accounts.			
Name of vehicle owner		sign here	
Address (Street and number or P.O. Box number)			
City	State	ZIP code	

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## **Appendix D**

### **Travel Options Comparison Example**

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## Travel by the most economical method

### Travel options comparison \* Estimated Expenses Example

Travel to Austin

From July 21, 2015 to July 23, 2015

GSA Rates				
Other hotel, not conference hotel				
				Total
Lodging				
Per diem rate per <a href="http://gsa.gov">gsa.gov</a>				
2 Nights	Rate:	\$ 126.00	\$	252.00
Vehicle				
Rental car		\$ 167.00		
Estimated fuel		\$ 38.00		
Total Vehicle			\$	205.00
Meals & Incidental				
Per diem rate per <a href="http://gsa.gov">gsa.gov</a>				
7/21/2015	Rate:	\$ 53.25		
7/22/2015	Rate:	\$ 71.00		
7/23/2015	Rate:	\$ 53.25		
Total Meals & Incidental	**	\$		177.50
Airfare			\$	346.00
Registration costs			\$	195.00
Total Estimated Travel Expenses	***		\$	<b>1,175.50</b>

Actual Costs				
Conference hotel				
				Total
Lodging				
Conference hotel rate				
2 Nights	Rate:	\$ 175.00	\$	350.00
Vehicle				
No rental car			\$	-
Meals & Incidental				
Per diem rate per <a href="http://gsa.gov">gsa.gov</a>				
7/21/2015	Rate:	\$ 53.25		
7/22/2015	Rate:	\$ 71.00		
7/23/2015	Rate:	\$ 53.25		
Total Meals & Incidental	**	\$		177.50
Airfare			\$	346.00
Registration costs			\$	195.00
Total Estimated Travel Expenses	***		\$	<b>1,068.50</b>

\* Include documentation for each estimated cost

\*\* Traveler can elect not to receive per diem reimbursement allowance

Meals included in registration fees or provided by another agency should be deducted from per diem reimbursement

\*\*\* Staying at conference hotel is overall more economical

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